

CAPS NEWSLETTER November 2009

'CAPS' is the charity that supports 'Positive Catholics'. Below you will see a copy of the World AIDS Day Newsletter. Please take a close look. In particular, contained in it are details of two **World AIDS Mass celebrations** that we will hold this year, organised by CAPS and our own members, in London and Birmingham. Thank you to those who have arranged this. We encourage as many of you as possible to attend and show support if you are able. We are sure these too, will be both prayerful and enjoyable occasions.

Lecture Notes

Attached as a word document (On the Positive Catholics Website hopefully you will soon find these lecture notes in our Theological and pastoral Resources page, thank you for your patience) are the notes of a lecture given earlier this year by Professor Margaret Farley, and the Rev. Dr. Robert Kaggwa. As CAPS sends out its newsletter by post, these notes will also be included.

WAD Flier

I apologise that I have to send you a rather small copy of our World AIDS Day fliers as a separate email. These will also go out with the newsletter below

For now, wishing each of you a peaceful time, with hope and faith around this special time of year.

**CATHOLICS
for
AIDS
2009
PREVENTION &
SUPPORT**

NOVEMBER

CAPS - PO BOX 24632, LONDON E9 6XF

positivecatholics@btinternet.com - 020 8986 0807 020 8986 0807

<http://positivecatholics.googlepages.com>

POSITIVE GREETINGS

Dear friends

As World AIDS Day 2009 comes near, bearing in mind the theme of 'Universal Access and Human Rights', we are pleased to bring you this **CAPS Newsletter**. Sadly, the United Nations reports that 2010 targets for universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support, are unlikely to be met. They also remind us that stigma and prejudice continue as a major obstacle in the battle against increasing HIV infections.^[1] With your help and prayers, CAPS continues to make a contribution to the important tasks of education, awareness raising, and direct support for those living with HIV.

Earlier this year the CAPS Trustees completed a strategy review. It will come as no surprise that the many areas of work and ministry outweighed our capacity as a small charity, and we have had to prioritise in order to respond to increasing needs. Top of the list is our ongoing commitment to support the 'Positive Catholics' ministry. We have tried to offer support to those directly involved in this ministry, as well as raising the funds to ensure access to pastoral care and support for any person living with HIV who asks for our help. There is a short report of the Positive Catholics ministry elsewhere, but here I think it important to mention that the enabling of this peer ministry, with very limited resources, seems to be striking a chord with the many Catholics living with HIV who have attended events over the past year. We can take some pride in the setting up of this unique model of ministry, which seeks to fill some of the gaps in pastoral care in this country.

We have also continued to be a Catholic voice within the secular HIV world, and have spoken at seminars and liaised with health agencies, most notably with the Terrence Higgins Trust, The George House Trust, and the Positive Parenting and Children charity. We have also facilitated workshops for the Mildmay Hospital chaplaincy group. We continue to lobby the Catholic hierarchy for a more coherent approach to the issues around HIV/AIDS, as well as bringing to their attention the pastoral needs of Catholics living with HIV. In April 2009, we organized a Westminster Cathedral Hall lecture and helped plan a theological conference on

HIV/AIDS at Roehampton University with **Professor Margaret Farley RSM** as keynote speaker. **Robert Kaggwa M.Afr.**, a CAPS Trustee, gave responses at both events. Their inspiring contributions are contained in the enclosed booklet; **CAN YOU DRINK THE CUP THAT I WILL DRINK?** CAPS were also represented at a theological symposium at Heythrop College in November 2009. Trustees also identified the need for relevant and up-to-date theological and pastoral resources, and we hope to make progress in this regard over the coming year.

Although we are fortunate to live in a country where access to medical care is generally good - access to pastoral care, and the fullest inclusion of people living with HIV in our own Church, is a long way off. Please continue to support us with your prayers, and if you can with some financial offering, to enable us to continue to build up the Body of Christ living with HIV in the UK.

Positive Catholics Ministry in brief

This year we have continued to meet regularly for prayer and sharing in small groups. We have also conducted 2 weekends away at Downside Abbey, and one larger summer retreat at Douai Abbey, catering for around forty adults and children in total. Our current network list has over 60 families or individuals living with HIV. We also held a special Lent liturgy at Farm Street Jesuit Church in Central London, and will hold an Advent liturgy in December.

We have continued to support individuals via our dedicated helpline, and through our webpage. We also assisted one family in their successful appeal for a Catholic school place, after they were denied a place for their son at secondary school.

The very important feature of this ministry is that it is peer led. Through ministering to each other, people living with HIV report that they have been strengthened in their faith. Most people say that in Church, living with HIV must remain a 'secret'; in the secular agencies, being a Catholic must remain a secret, where matters of spirituality and faith are generally not addressed, or treated with hostility. Positive Catholics enables people living with HIV to come together as brothers and sisters in Christ, to share stories and faith honestly; to be listened to; and to find understanding, acceptance, and encouragement in the sure knowledge of God's love for us. For fuller details, feedback from, and reports of activities, please go to <http://positivecatholics.googlepages.com>

Stop Press

Please pray for one of our CAPS Trustees, **Fr. John Sherrington, CP**, who was elected UK Provincial Superior of the Congregation of the Passion earlier this year. He has been the principle 'chaplain' for Positive Catholics over the past four years. His new role may limit his engagement with us, and we will miss his sensitive pastoral support while thanking him for his commitment and service. Please pray for **Anne Gayer** and her family.

Anne resigned as trustee and treasurer this year. We thank her for her dedication and service since 2003.

Appeal to Priests and Religious

As membership of Positive Catholics grows, and expands around the country, we need sensitive priests and religious who are willing to serve the needs of our members. Could you help out on our retreats? Could we refer a person in your area to you for pastoral care? Could you keep alive HIV/AIDS issues in your parish or community? Please get in touch if you feel able to commit some time to those living with HIV.

Can you help? – Yes, you can!

The Positive Catholics retreats are costed at around £5k annually. Approximately 7 out of ten of our members last year needed financial support to attend. Can you help us with our costs by giving a small amount each month?

Wishing you and yours a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year, as together we try to enable the Church to live positively with HIV/AIDS.

Vincent Manning - CAPS Chairperson

[\[1\]](#) UNAIDS, Dialogue on Universal Access: A summary of consultations with key stakeholders, June 2009

FOR YOUR DIARY

WORLD AIDS CELEBRATIONS :

World AIDS Mass, with Fr. Michael Kirwan SJ - Head of Theology, Heythrop College, University of London, **Sunday, 29 November 2009**, 17.00, The Church of Our Lady & St. Gregory, Warwick Street, Soho, London W1B 5NB.

Mass of Hope for World AIDS Day in Birmingham - remembering those who we have lost to HIV/Aids - praying for a vaccine - longing for a cure, **Tuesday, 1 December 2009**, 18.15, St Catherine's Church, Bristol Street, Birmingham B5 7BE. <http://www.stcatherinesbirmingham.org.uk>

Positive Voices

"To sing is to pray twice" is an encouragement for everyone, remembering that we all have a voice, but some might be more tuneful or vocal than others! Here are some hymns, set to familiar tunes, many of which will be found in *Laudate, Hymns Old & New, The New English Hymnal*, and which will add meaning to our worship, whether that be for ordinary Sunday liturgies or special World AIDS celebrations:

We live in hope (Words: *F. Richard Garland* 2008. Published by the General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203 USA; tune: Finlandia -11 10 11 10 1110 - *Jean Sibelius*)

We live in hope for God is always present,
Despite the hurt and pain we've suffered long.
We live in faith that God will not abandon
The precious child to whom we all belong.
We live in love with grace and peace enduring.
As God renews our spirits are made strong.

Do not lose heart, for God so loved the world
That life and hope are touched with healing grace.
God reconciles, restores redeems the broken,
And reunites our hearts in love's embrace.
O God of hope, our prayers we lift to you.
O spread your love on all within this place.

We gather here in faith and hope (Words: *W. Richard Turner* - copyright details as above; Tune: Kingsfold - DCM - *Ralph Vaughan Williams*)

We gather here in faith and hope when worries crowd our day.
Our worldly cares consume our lives and we forget to pray.
God gives us hope; God calms our fears; God makes our worries cease.
If all we see is hopelessness, we miss God's grace and peace.

We gather here in faith and hope when illness comes our way.
We minister with those we love; for health and strength we pray.
When illness comes it's God who heals; it's God who makes us whole.
No matter how our bodies fail, God's guardian of our soul.

We gather here in faith and hope amidst the sounds of strife.
When conflicts tear our world apart and hatred cheapens life.
God gives us hope, God knows our pain, God's Son was crucified.
Our Lord has felt our hopelessness, when on the Cross he died.

We gather here in hope and love amidst a time of grief.
Our shattered lives will test our faith; please help our unbelief.
Be with us, God, our faith restore when lives are torn apart.
We say goodbye to those we love; please heal the broken heart.

A plague of indifference, leaves nations in poverty (Words: *Andrew E Pratt, Stainer & Bell Ltd*;
with some adaptation it can be sung to the tune: Liebster Immanuel - 11
10 11 10)

A plague of indifference leaves nations in poverty,
Children are dying, have no hope of life.
All the world's splendour is tarnished and broken,
Love is the victim of blindness and strife.

Open our eyes, God, bring healing and hopefulness;
Open our minds to your purpose and power;
Through apathy, laxity, selfish ambition,
Drive shafts of sweetness where life has turned sour.
AIDS is the enemy but through complicity
We have abetted its spread and its scope;
Christ Jesus met suffering with love and compassion;
This is our pattern, the way we must cope.

As the darkness gathers round us (Words: *Andrew E Pratt*,
copyright details as above; Tune: Love divine - 87 87)

As the darkness grows around us
Shadows lengthen into night,
God fulfil your advent promise,
In the gloom let there be light.

In our childhood's understanding
Life seemed limitless and free,
Now we face the contemplation
Of our own mortality.

Life seemed simple spread before,
Now distorted, futile, flawed;
Child-like hope has been extinguished,
Fear, with understanding, spawned.

Here in doubt and dereliction,
Searching for the reason why,
Hoping prayer might kindle kindness,
Hoping you might hear our cry.

Longing for your advent promise,
Light in darkness, joy for pain,
Hoping we might find the pathway
Back to life and love again.

Now we're startled by the stillness,
Stark surprise that you are there,
Then we're blinded by the dazzle
Of the dawning of your care.

Dying of loneliness (Words: *Andrew E Pratt, copyright details as above;*
Tune: any 11 10 11 10 metre)

Dying of loneliness, Lord, I've no comfort,
Bearing the stresses that life has to give;
Walking in silence, I've no conversation,
Searching in vain for a reason to live.

Join me in solitude, sit down beside me,
Christ, show compassion, bring pardon and peace;
Value my friendship and give my life purpose,
Chains of my sorrow come break and release.

Bless me with joyfulness, shine in my darkness,
Lead me from sorrow out into the light;
Give me new freedom and hope for tomorrow,
Wings of an eagle to soar on love's flight!

Keep me from helplessness (Words: *Andrew E Pratt, copyright details as above;* Tune: *with some adaptation, 11 10 11 10 metre*)

Keep me from helplessness leading to hopelessness;
Lord, be my guide through darkness and strife.
Value my being, don't nurture my nakedness;
Lift me and love me, give meaning to life.
Held in a prison house, crippled by prejudice;
Share my captivity, silently care.
Face with me fearlessly folly's shear edifice;

Quietly and calmly, yes, simply be there.

Now, quite explosively, freedom and liberty
Break on my being like infinite light;
Dazzling my senses with love's creativity,
Banishing darkness and ending the night!

World AIDS Day (Words: *Andrew E Pratt, copyright details as above;*
Tune: Herongate or any 88 88 metre)

We come to you, O God, as friends,
To share the pain and fear we know,
To listen with our hearts and minds,
To offer love, not empty show.

And as we speak each hidden fear,
With empathy, from day to day,
Together we will live in hope
For we will act as well as pray.

This double-bind of poverty
And illness, known by some from birth,
Demands that we should stand as one
To underline our common worth.

So let us each embrace with Christ
Our sister, brother, harmed or whole;
Until we find in common grace
A means to heal both flesh and soul.

People think, to be free (Words: *Sheila J Baldock, copyright details as above;*
Tune: Personent hodie/
Theodoric – 66 66 6)

People think, to be free, this is how you must be:
Concentrate just on me - never mind the others -
Sisters, friends and brothers!

**Set us free, free, free! Set us free, free, free:
Free to love, free to serve, free to be God's people.**

Jesus said that he came to set free sick and lame,
Said to us: Do the same - then you'll really know me,
And to others show me. *Chorus ...*

Wheelchair bound, trapped at home, ill with AIDS, all alone:
Knock the door, use the phone, just a little sharing
Means you're really caring. *Chorus ...*

Slaves who work without pay, those deprived of their say,
Innocents locked away: need us to stand with them,
Love and justice give them. *Chorus ...*

Sometimes fear holds us back; fear of loss, fear of lack;
Fear of pain, fear of flack; as God's love enfolds us,
Fear no longer holds us. *Chorus ...*

When illness meets denial and rejection (Words: *Brian Wren*,
copyright details as above; Tune: any 11 10 11 10 metre)

When illness meets denial and rejection,
When friends recoil, and faces turn to stone,
Christ of our Sorrows, raise us from dejection,
To travel on, assailed but not alone.

Forgive your Church's searing, numbing silence,
Unholy huddles, muddles and delays.
Forgive our zeal to hide the fear that drives us
With harsh, unloving words, unhealing ways.

Help us resist, refuse all vengeful naming
Of lepers, plagues, and punishment for sin,
With love's determined power to banish blaming,
Shed light and truth, and heal the hurt within.

Show us our hidden strength and human limits.
Free us from guilt, self-hatred and despair,
To celebrate, as flesh-embodied spirits,
Our body's beauty, and our Makers care.

Give us, amid our passion and persistence,
The peace that wishful thinking cannot fake.
Link us in loving circles of resistance,
With love of life that death can never break.

Through summer joys and winters of dejection,
Help us, by faith, to travel, weep and sing,
With hearts that reap the fruit of resurrection,
And hands that bear the loving touch of spring.

O Christ, the healer (Words: *Fred Pratt Green*, verse 2 adapted,
Stainer & Bell Ltd; Tune: *Melcome* or any Long Metre - 88 88)

O Christ, the healer, we have come
to pray for health, to plead for friends.

How can we fail to be restored,
when reached by love that never ends?

From HIV our flesh endures
our bodies clamour to be freed;
yet in our hearts we would confess
that wholeness is our deepest need.

How strong, O Lord, are our desires,
how weak our knowledge of ourselves!
Release in us those healing truths
unconscious pride resists or shelves.

In conflicts that destroy our health,
we diagnose the world's disease;
our common life declares our ills:
is there no cure, O Christ, for these?

Grant that we all, made one in faith,
in your community may find
the wholeness that, enriching us,
shall reach the whole of humankind.

World AIDS Day Resources:

Positive Rites is a 90+ page booklet of worship resources, many of which deal particularly with previous World AIDS Day themes. It also contains some of the services used in past years at Southwark Anglican Cathedral, CAFOD/Caritas events throughout the world.

From **CAPS**, cost: **£3.00** each, or **£5.00** (for two, incl. p/p) - **Catholics for AIDS Prevention & Support (CAPS), PO Box 24632, London E9 6XF** - **020 8986 0807** **020 8986 0807** - **e-mail: positivecatholics@btinternet.com**

Many of the following websites have worship material and other resources which can be downloaded:

UNAIDS - www.unaids.org

National AIDS Trust - www.nat.org.uk

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) - www.cafod.org.uk

Christian Aid - www.christianaid.org.uk/issues/hiv

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance - www.e-alliance.ch

The Balm in Gilead - www.balmingilead.org

The African American Lectionary - www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org

Gone before us, marked with the sign of faith

Tim Pascall + 12 November 1945 - 18 August 2009

The final sentence of one of the many articles written by Tim Pascall about AIDS and Africa reads: *Millions, like me, may be HIV-positive but we won't die of AIDS!* How tragically prophetic he was, and the news of his death in a motor-cycle accident, near Aberystwyth, Wales, on 18 August, stunned his family and friends.

Timothy Hugh Pascall was born near London in 1945 but spent most of his childhood in the Netherlands where his father worked for the Dutch airline, KLM. After primary school there, and secondary school in England, in 1963 he joined the Missionaries of Africa, previously known as the White Fathers, with the intention of becoming a missionary priest. However, after three and a half years training, the gradual realisation of his sexual orientation, and feeling at the time that it was not compatible with the priesthood brought this to an early end.

After several temporary jobs he retrained as a computer programmer. He lived and worked in London until 1982, and then after a brief stay in Berlin, moved to Amsterdam. He moved back to England in 2007, settling in Hayling Island, Hampshire. He was a committed Liberal Democrat and stood as a candidate in local Council elections in 2008. He found his faith nurtured and a warm welcome in the local Catholic parish.

He tested HIV-positive in 1984, and although he eventually came to use the new therapies, he survived for 18 years without medication, experiencing no major illness. He put this down to an unusually strong immune system, but most of his friends – infected before they even knew of the virus – were dead by the end of the 20th century. Many would feel that it was his passion for life and commitment to Gospel values that help boost his immune system.

In 1996 Tim made contact with the then Catholic AIDS Link. Attending one of its conferences he began to realise the enormity of the pandemic and its impact on Africa. In December 1997 Tim wrote a letter to *The Tablet*, taking on the Zambian Catholic bishops for their inadequate and judgemental stance and through subsequent correspondence with other *Tablet* correspondents established links with Malawi.

He first visited Malawi in May 1999, the first of many visits, precisely to try to understand why AIDS had hit Africa so much harder than elsewhere. His sense of failure in persuading European politicians of the enormity of the catastrophe in Africa led him to write under the pseudonym Frank Ham, *AIDS in Africa – how did it ever happen?* This was published in 2004 in the Kachere Series as part of a range of books on religion, culture and society in Malawi, by the Department of Theology & Religious Studies of the University of Malawi.**

Tim was an inveterate letter-writer to *The Tablet* and he found it incomprehensible that others, not least editors or publishers, could not see the rightness, perhaps even infallibility of his arguments. Although Tim loved to emphasise his Englishness, to many of his friends he was so

stereotypically Dutch! At times he was his own worse enemy, expounding his views so dogmatically that he often failed to hear when people were actually agreeing with him. After I dared to disagree with some parts of his book, particularly in the light of the developing HIV strategies of agencies such as CAFOD, or Caritas Internationalis, with both of which he would reluctantly admit that he had no close links or knowledge, I received a two-page letter telling me just how wrong I was, in spite of my agreeing with most of the book's contents!

Moving to Hampshire in 2007, Tim re-engaged with Catholic AIDS Link's successor registered charity, Catholics for AIDS Prevention & Support. He became active in developing Positive Catholics, a peer-support network for people living with HIV who also identify as Catholic or Christian. He was a key in organising various retreats at welcoming monasteries in different parts of England, helping to staff a stall at LGBT Pride London events, and taking part in World AIDS Day Masses in London.

His warmth, generosity, compassion and care for others enabled both him and others, be they individuals or agencies, to overcome or ignore his impatience, rush to judgment, or hasty dismissal of others' solidly based positions and opinions. That he was killed in circumstances where he was going to the assistance of another motor-cyclist whom he thought might be in some trouble was so typical of his altruism.

Tim's family, fellow-bikers, friends from CAPS/Positive Catholics, Amsterdam and Berlin, filled St. Peter's Church, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, on 27 August for the funeral, presided over by his parish priest from Hayling Island, Fr. Andrew Chandler. The moving and joyful tributes paid by his nieces and nephews during the service witnessed how deeply he cherished his extended family, and how treasured he was by them.

A Memorial Mass, at which CAPS and Positive Catholics were represented, was celebrated in October at St. Patrick's, Hayling Island.

Martin Pendergast

** CAPS hopes to obtain remaining copies of Tim's book. Please let us know if you'd like a copy.

The CAPS Board of Trustees includes:

Daisy Byaruhanga + The Rev. Robert Kaggwa M. Afr. + The Rev. Christopher Howard + The Rev. Bernard Lynch SMA (Vice-Chair) + Vincent Manning (Chair) + Adela Mugabo + Stephan Portlock + The Rev. John Sherrington CP + John Thornhill

The Trustees meet on a quarterly basis and its next meeting will be in February 2010. If you wish to raise any issues for discussion by the Trustees, please notify us before **31 January 2010**.

Catholics for AIDS Prevention & Support is a registered charity:
Charity Commission Number: **1095756**